TRAILS OF THE MARANOA

Explore the culture, history and areas of the Maranoa towns that cannot be seen from a bus or car.
Wander back through time along Roma’s Historic Walk to discover the early settlement of this important outback Queensland town in the 1860s.

Roma’s landmarks chronicle the economic and social development of the district and its reaction to major events like cattle duffing and the arrival of rail in the 19th century, the growth of agriculture and commerce and the town’s contributions to two World Wars.

See where Roma locals gathered to shop, conduct business, worship and catch up on the news of the day for almost 150 years. Allow an hour or two for your walk. If time is short, consider covering sites 1-19 on one walk, and sites 20-25 on another. This brochure provides a map and an overview of the walk, and plaques at each landmark provide more information about the site’s contribution to Roma’s exciting and diverse history.

The Queensland Government established Roma as an administrative centre for the growing district in 1862. The town took its name from the wife of Queensland’s first Governor, the Countess Diamantina Roma, and was the first gazetted settlement following Queensland’s separation from New South Wales in 1859.

Steeped in colourful history since its inception, Roma gave Queensland its first wine in 1866 and, in 1900, the town was the site of Australia’s first natural gas strike which sparked a short-lived oil ‘boom’ during the Depression years. Notorious bushranger Harry Redford (the legendary Captain Starlight) was cleared of cattle rustling in his controversial trial in Roma in 1873, having stolen 1,000 cattle, which were driven to South Australia, a feat immortalised in the novel “Robbery Under Arms”.

Roma grew quickly, especially after the arrival of the rail line in 1880, and became a bustling centre for trade and commerce. The community contributed magnificently to the 20th century’s wars and the district’s World War I fallen are commemorated in Roma’s Heroes’ Avenue of bottle trees. The landmarks along this walk represent the ups and downs of life in and around Roma over two centuries. Discover their stories.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>1.5 km – 2 kms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>1 – 2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrain</td>
<td>Flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty</td>
<td>Easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnic area/seating</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise Equipment</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Fountain</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Toilets</td>
<td>Yes, in CBD area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uniting Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Until this church was built in 1896, church-goers worshipped at the Congregational Church which was built in 1872 and survives today as the Christian Outreach Centre (3).</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>St Paul’s Anglican Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Built in 1913, this beautiful church features magnificent stained glass windows, some of which were shipped from England in the 1870s.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Originally the Congregational Church and built in 1872, this is possibly Roma’s oldest surviving public building.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Commonwealth Bank This site has been occupied by various businesses over the years. The current 1987 building replaced a classic art deco structure built in the 1930s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Royal Hotel The Royal Mail, as it was originally known, was a stop for Cobb and Co’s mail coaches. The present building was built in 2016 after the previous building built in 1920, was destroyed by fire in November 2014.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>School of Arts The glassed turret of this classic early 20th century building was used as a lookout for enemy aircraft during World War II.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Hunters Store and the Queen’s Arms Hotel These historic buildings have fronted McDowall Street since 1916 and today trade as Ace Drapers and Irish McGann’s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ladbrook’s Butchery Originally built in 1919 as one of only six purpose-designed State butcher shops, this store has supplied meat to Roma almost continuously since then.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>James Saunders Chemist James Saunders established his chemist and dentist business on this site in 1871. Today, it is Australia’s longest surviving continuous pharmacy site.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If you’d like some exercise or just want to enjoy the outdoors, take time to step it out along the Adungadoo Pathway.

The two kilometre recreational path follows the banks of the Bungil Creek through Roma from the Big Rig to Apex Park. In 1847, Allan McPherson the first white settler in Roma mapped the area and was guided by the Aboriginal community who had names for each section of the creek. The present walkway follows that section of the creek called Adungadoo.

This area recognises the importance to the local indigenous community. The walk passes by a recreated Aboriginal ceremonial smoking pit, meeting place and bush knowledge garden.

A feature of Adungadoo Pathway is the ancient river gums which line the trail. The native birdlife, local plant species and shady lagoons complete the beauty and tranquillity of the walk, best experienced at the end of the day.

Distance: 2 kms  
Time: 30 minutes  
Terrain: Flat, gentle undulations  
Difficulty: Easy

Exercise Equipment: Yes  
Picnic Area/seating: Yes  
Water Fountain: Yes  
Public Toilets: At either end
Hospital Hill in Roma was the site of Australia’s first natural gas discovery made in 1900 which led to a boom in gas and oil exploration and production in the region.

The discovery was made accidentally after the Queensland Government’s first attempt to find an artesian water supply for Roma from a well known as QG1. A second well drilled nearby named QG2 successfully produced not only water but gas. In 1906 the gas from QG2 was reticulated to Roma for town lighting but this venture failed after two weeks when the gas ran out.

In 1908 during drilling of QG3, gas was encountered again and set alight by the wood burning steam boiler of the rig. After 45 days the blaze was finally extinguished with an ingenious iron tank, suspended over the well and lowered from steel cables.

In the years following, the Roma Oil Corporation drilled three wells on Hospital Hill which produced significant flows of oil and gas. The company erected an absorption plant at Hospital Hill which manufactured petrol from oil and condensate.

Distance: 2 kms  
Time: 2 hours  
Terrain: Flat, gentle undulations  
Difficulty: Easy  
Exercise Equipment: No  
Picnic Area: No  
Water Fountain: Yes  
Public Toilets: Yes
HOSPITAL HILL WALK

1 ROC 1
2 ROC 2
3 ROC 3
4 QG1
5 QG2
6 QG3
7 QG4
8 Gasometer
9 Separator Base
10 Absorption Plant
11 ROC Water Bore
12 Lander 4
The Roma Bush Gardens is a 14ha site on the edge of Roma specially designed to showcase 15 vegetation communities representative of the Roma area. The two dams were initially built to supply water for the steam engines used on the railway.

The gardens are set around a large body of permanent water and interconnected by walking paths. The Roma Bush Gardens, a work in progress, has involved bringing in soil and planting many trees across the area during the past two decades.

Future plans for the Roma Bush Gardens include an amphitheatre, arboretum and further planting of vegetation communities, understory plant species and species that have been traditionally valued by Aboriginal people for food, medicine and tools.

Distance: 1.5 kms
Time: 30 minutes
Terrain: Flat, gentle undulations
Difficulty: Easy

Exercise Equipment: No
Picnic Area: Yes
Water Fountain: No
Public Toilets: No
1 Riparian
River red gum communities (Eucalyptus camaldulensis) occur throughout the Maranoa along the banks of major watercourses. Red gum forests are capable of recycling nutrients as a means of coping with nutrient poor soils and drought. The gums are important in the diet of hundreds of native animals and provide hollows for nesting, breeding and protection for native birds, mammals and arboreal reptiles. Riparian environments also provide habitat for water rats, turtles and freshwater fish and are the life-blood of semiarid landscapes.

2 Brigalow/Belah
Brigalow (Acacia harpophylia) and belah communities had a wide distribution to the northwest, north and east of Roma. Clearing for cropping and pasture improvement has significantly reduced the area of these communities – all are now endangered. Like all Acacia species, brigalow converts atmospheric nitrogen into a form used by plants. Brigalow provides good shade and belah in an excellent windbreak. Remnants are a valuable habitat for many endangered reptiles in the region.

3 Cypress Pine
Cypress pine (Callitris glauca) occurs throughout the region, on sandy, loamy or stony soils. It forms pure stands, or is associated with carbeen, poplar box, iron wood, ironbarks, and smooth-barked apple. It is habitat for the rare golden-tailed gecko, and its seeds are eaten by Major-Mitchell cockatoos. Cypress forestry is a major local industry. The timber is highly resistant to termite attack.

4 Poplar Box Woodland
Poplar box (Eucalyptus populnea) is a dominant tree found within the Maranoa. It is a major hollow-forming eucalypt in southern inland Queensland providing habitat for many arboreal mammals, bats and birds. Box woodlands are an important habitat for koalas in the west. Aboriginal people make didgeridoos from the hollowed out branches and trunks of poplar box trees.

5 Grassy Downs with Myall
Grassy open downs occupy a significant area in the region. The main grasses are blue grass, Mitchell grass and Flinders grass. These grasses are important to native mammals and birds, and provide valuable grazing for livestock. Trees on the downs are fairly sparse or occur in small clumps. Myall (Acacia pendula) is a dominant species that occurs in heavy black clay soils in association with boonaree and whitewood. Myall’s silver-grey weeping foliage is distinctive.

6 Downs Softwood
Downs softwood occurs on the crests of the undulating Mitchell grass downs country to the west of Roma. It is a scrubby open woodland community with unique biodiversity because most of the trees are neither eucalypts nor acacias. Species include boonaree, beefwood, whitewood, desert lime, emu apple, sandalwood and supplejack.

7 Coolibah
Coolibah (Eucalyptus Coolabah) trees are well adapted to coping with floods and fire. Special structures within the coolibahs allow the plant to breathe even after weeks of the trunk and the roots being underwater. Underground lignotubers and epicormic buds protected by the bark enables these trees to reshoot after fire. The historical and social importance of coolibahs in Australia is illustrated in Banjo Patterson’s classic poem ‘Waltzing Matilda’ which mentions a swagman who camped under one of these shade trees near Winton. The timber of coolibah is hard, durable and termite resistant and is useful for construction.

8 Mulgaland
Mulga trees (Acacia aneura) grow in many parts of inland Australia. In favourable conditions plants will grow one metre every 10 years until they reach 10 metres tall. Removing mulga for fodder during drought decreases nitrogen levels in the soil, depriving other valuable desert plants of food. There is a symbiotic relationship between acacias (such as brigalow and mulga) and a nitrogen binding bacteria. Mulga was an important source of food for Aboriginal people. Seeds were separated from the pod by rubbing, threshing, parching and winnowing then moistened with water and ground to an edible paste.

9 Bendee Open Forest
Bendee Open Forest (Acacia catenulata) grows in red loamy soils in eroded tertiary landforms and weathered sandstone outcrops. It is found in the 150-700mm annual rainfall belt in isolated pockets from south of Charters Towers to the western Darling Downs and the Grey Range west of Thargomindah. The ground flora in bendee country is usually sparse – mainly wire grasses (Aristida spp.) of little grazing value.

10 Belah
Belah (Casuarina cristata) is a deep-rooted, salt tolerant tree. It grows around the Marano in very heavy soils that are highly valued for pastoral production. Belah communities have been cleared extensively for agricultural developments in the region. Efforts by Queensland Government and community groups to protect the remaining stands of belah forest have given this ecosystem a helping hand. Land owners are encouraged to protect remnants of this endangered ecosystem so that it is conserved for all to enjoy and utilise in the future.
Injune, located 100 kilometres north of Roma, is well known for its role in the timber, cattle and natural gas industries.

Injune, considered the ‘Gateway to the Carnarvons,’ is a stopover for travellers on their way north to one of Queensland’s most visited National Parks, the Carnarvon National Park, or to smaller parks such as Lonesome, Beilba, Nuga Nuga and Mt Moffatt.

The Injune Lagoon Walk is fun for the whole family, whether a stroll or faster paced jog or cycle around the shaded, peaceful lagoon area to the east of Injune township. The walkway is located 380 metres from the town centre and 100 metres from the Injune Caravan Park.

The main feature of the Injune Lagoon walk is the spectacular up-close views of the lagoon. Be tempted to throw in a line as the locals catch fish here. The bird life and friendly marsupials are in abundance early and late in the day.

Alongside the walk is outdoor fitness equipment, so enjoy a short work out before, during or after your walk.

Seating is available near the Caravan Park and you will need to take a drink with you as there is no water along the walk.

The walk is flat and can be easily navigated by those pushing prams. Although not fully disabled accessible, the walk does suit those in all types of wheelchairs, with assistance.

| Distance | 1.2 kms |
| Time    | 20 minutes |
| Terrain | Flat |
| Difficulty | Easy |

Exercise Equipment: Yes
Picnic Area/Seating: Yes
Water Fountain: No
Public Toilet: No
Mitchell, known as the ‘Gateway to the Outback,’ is situated 90 kilometres west of Roma on the Maranoa River.

The Maranoa River heads in the magnificent Mt Moffatt National Park to the north where legendary bushrangers, the Kenniff brothers, roamed in the early 1900’s. Along with its bushranging history, Mitchell is proud of its local indigenous culture, pioneering past and the pristine natural beauty of the area.

Commence your River Walk journey at the Mitchell Hall complex which incorporates the Great Artesian Spa Complex and Mitchell Swimming Pool. Here you can view the names of the valiant local men and women who served their district and country during war. Beside the river, view the A Maze in Gates with its musical cattle grid at the centre. This is a work in progress and the gates bear the names of local properties and the handicap of local property owners.

Ask a local the best spots to catch fish and throw in a line.

As you walk, watch for local birds and marsupials as they have a drink or swim.

Return to the top of the river bank near the bridge and head north along the roadways parallel to the Maranoa River. Walk for 4.2 km in mown grassland, along the road reserve and vehicle tracks from the Warrego Highway Bridge to the Neil Turner Weir.

This walk is not suited to wheeled transport as the sand becomes heavy on local tracks when it is dry.

*Please note: These walks have sustained extensive damage during the February 2012 floods. The worst flooding in history in the Maranoa River*

Distance .............................. 4.2 kms
Time ................................. 40 minutes
Terrain ................................. Flat
Difficulty ............................. Medium
Exercise Equipment .................. No
Picnic Area/Seating .................. Yes
Water Fountain ........................ No
Public Toilet .......................... Yes
WARRONG ROAD
BRISTOL STREET
FOREST VALE ROAD
YUMBA TRAIL
210kms to St George,
7kms to Kenniff
Monuments
87kms to Roma
To Major Mitchell Campsite
& Mt Moffat
To Mungallala,
Charleville & Fishermans Rest
87kms to Roma
TRAILS OF MARANOA 19
The picture-postcard town of Surat is situated on the banks of the tranquil Balonne River, which is an angler’s dream. As locals will tell you, the fishing is plentiful.

Surat is steeped in history with links to the Cobb and Co coach service. The Cobb and Co Changing Station houses a museum, which includes a 14 seater Cobb and Co coach, making it well worth a visit.

So enjoy the fishing, soak up the history of Cobb and Co and take a walk at your own pace in the riverside parklands.

This serene and picturesque walk follows the Balonne River, east and west of the Riverside Parklands in Surat for approximately two kilometres.

This walk allows easy walking for all ages. Wheelchairs and prams can safely navigate the level concrete walkway. The features of this walk include fitness and leisure equipment, water fountain, excellent footbridges and a spectacular viewing platform overlooking the river. There are play areas for children.

Commence the walk on Marcus Street near the Memorial Park and head westwards until you reach the Weir Parklands, which is the perfect spot to picnic with a BBQ, seating and shade available. Return to your starting point and continue east on the gravel walkway (600m) where you can experience walking over the footbridge attached to the Balonne River Bridge and continue on to the Fisherman’s Rest Park and Caravan Park.

On the town side of the Balonne River Bridge you can head further eastward along a gravel track to the aboriginal interpretative shelter that tells the story of local family histories and gives an insight into cultural awareness.

Take your camera and a water bottle and be amazed at the beauty of the stark riverscape’s bird life and native plants.

Distance .................. 2 kms
Time ...................... 45 minutes
Terrain ...................... Flat
Difficulty ................... Easy

Exercise Equipment ........... Yes
Picnic area/seating ........... Yes
Water Fountain ................ Yes
Public Toilets ................ Yes
Experience the charm of Wallumbilla and its history as a railway town.

The old Wallumbilla Railway Station and Heritage Complex houses memorabilia detailing rail travel which was fundamental to people early last century. It includes archival records of a tragic rail disaster in the district in 1956. Visit Calico Cottage, Wallumbilla’s Visitor Information Centre which is situated under the mammoth storage shed once used to house items awaiting delivery on or off the train.

This trail beginning at Calico Cottage, includes an element of historical folklore. Locals believe Harry Thompson, a reclusive hermit, to be Steve Hart of the Ned Kelly gang. Read the story at the trailhead and form your own opinion.

This short walk meanders along the Wallumbilla Creek and loops back into the town centre.

It features outdoor fitness equipment, water fountain and seating which allows you to pause awhile and enjoy the views onto the creek with possible sightings of local bird and animal life.

This walk allows safe passage from the Wallumbilla Showgrounds and camping facility to the Visitor Information Centre at Calico Cottage. Please show caution when crossing the Warrego Highway.

Distance . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 1 km
Time . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 30 minutes
Terrain . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Flat
Difficulty . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Easy
Exercise Equipment . . . . . . . . . . . . . Yes
Picnic area/seating . . . . . . . . . . . . . Yes
Water Fountain . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Yes
Public Toilets . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Yes
Yuleba has strong links to Cobb and Co coach service days, with the last Cobb and Co run in Australia travelling from Surat and ending at Yuleba in 1924. Enjoy the street murals and historical Cobb and Co corduroys, south of Yuleba, which allowed coach passage during the wet.

The Aboriginal meaning for Yuleba is ‘place of the water lilies.’ Depending on the season, water lillies can be seen at Judd’s Lagoon, a great camping spot east of town. The spot is worth a visit to sit awhile and enjoy the sounds of the bush.

Bendemere Walk remembers the historical significance of the Bendemere Shire as a pioneer of the local pastoral industry and hub for early modes of transport. It is a short walk along the trail beginning and ending at Garth Cox Park in Stephenson Street, encircling the centre of Yuleba. This walk commences in the main street and takes you past local history murals and into a rural setting along the creek and edge of town.

Distance ..................... 1.2 kms
Time ......................... 30 minutes
Terrain ....................... Flat
Difficulty .................... Easy

Exercise Equipment .......... Yes
Picnic area/seating .......... Yes
Water Fountain ............... Yes
Public Toilets ............... Yes
## VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centre Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roma Visitor Information Centre</td>
<td>The Big Rig, Warrego Highway, Roma</td>
<td>07 4622 8676</td>
<td><a href="mailto:romavic@maranoa.qld.gov.au">romavic@maranoa.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injune Visitor Information Centre</td>
<td>32 Hutton St, Injune</td>
<td>07 4626 0503</td>
<td><a href="mailto:injunevic@maranoa.qld.gov.au">injunevic@maranoa.qld.gov.au</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mitchell Visitor Information Centre</td>
<td>Great Artesian Spa, 2 Cambridge St, Mitchell</td>
<td>07 4624 6923</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mitchellvic@maranoa.qld.gov.au">mitchellvic@maranoa.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surat Visitor Information Centre</td>
<td>Cobb &amp; Co Changing Station, 62 Burrowes St, Surat</td>
<td>07 4626 5136</td>
<td><a href="mailto:suratvic@maranoa.qld.gov.au">suratvic@maranoa.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallumbilla Visitor Information Centre</td>
<td>Calico Cottage, Warrego Highway, Wallumbilla</td>
<td>07 4623 4244</td>
<td><a href="mailto:wallumbillavic@maranoa.qld.gov.au">wallumbillavic@maranoa.qld.gov.au</a></td>
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</tbody>
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Recommended walking time for all walks is early morning or/and late afternoon (especially in the Summer months) as this is the optimum time to avoid the heat and catch sight of local wildlife and birds.